

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 040630Z AUG 76P

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8722

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T SANA 2698

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION TO HAMDI

REF: SANA 2472 AND 2304

SUMMARY: MOUJAHID ABU SHUWARIB

1. ACCORDING MINSTATE AL-HAJRI AND DIRECTOR CENTRAL SECURITY ABDALLAH SINHANI, YAR PRESENIDENT HAMDI'S MOST WORRISOME AND INFLEXIBLE RIVAL MOUJAHID ABU SHUWARIB SHOWED UP IN TOWN DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY (AUGUST 1) IN PLACATORY MOOD.

2. AS MOUJAHID IS ON HIS WAY OUT OF COUNTRY, PRESUMABLY FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, GOVERNMENT IS BEING VERY NICE. HAMDI RECEIVED HIM AT REPUBLICAN PALACE AND GAVE LUNCH FOR HIM. AHJRI REPORTS THAT MOUJAHID CAN HANDLE PRACTICALLY ANY JOB HE WANTS IN AN OVERSEAS EMBASSY.

3. HAJRI HAS ONLY KIND WORDS FOR MOUJAHID'S BROTHER-IN-LAW ABDALLAH BIN HUSSIN AL AHMAR, WHO MAY ALSO BE INSANA (WE HAVE MIXED REPORTS OF LATTER). MOREOVER, OFFICIAL VIEW OF PROBLEMS IN THE NORTH, WHICH GOVERNMENT DOES NOT COMPLETELY CONTROL, IS THAT THEY HAVE STEADILY DIMINISHED

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FOR PAST SIX MONTHS. MAJOR TURNING POINTS, BEFORE

MOUJAHID SUBMISSION, WERE SULTAN VISIT IN APRIL AND VERY STRONG BU CONTROLLED REACTION OF YAR MILITARY TO ARHAB INCIDENTS IN MAY. SULTAN TOLD SHAYKH ASSEMBLED IN HIS HONOR BY ABDALLAH BIN HUSSEIN AL AHMAR THAT ANYONE CUTTING A ROAD OR DEFYING A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL IN SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE SHOT. THEREAFTER, IN ARHAB, HAMDI DID JUST THAT.

4. PRIME MINISTER TOLD CHARGE ON JULY 31 THAT GOVERNMENT CONTROL IN NORTH IS EXPANDING. DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMS IS TALKING ABOUT NEW RECEIPTS FROM NORTHERN CITIES LIKE SAADA AND KHAMR WHERE LOCAL GRANDEES (INCLUDING MOUJAHID) SIMPLY KEPT EVERYTHING THEY GOT THEIR HANDS ON IN PAST. SECURITY ON ROAD TO NORTH IS MINIMAL NOW, AFTER MONTHS OF MOUNTAIN-TOP ENCAMPMENTS AND HEAVY PATROLS. EMBOFF WHO VISITED SAADAH IN PAST TEN DAYS SAW HUNDREDS OF GOVERNMENT TROOPS IN PLACE.

5. PARENTHETICALLY, IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT HAMDI HAS ALSO VENTURED IN LAST TEN DAYS INTO FAR SOUTH OF YAR, NEAR PDRY BORDER, FOR FIRST TIME WE KNOW OF SINCE BECOMING PRESIDENT. HE VISITED NADIRA AND DAMTH IN IBB PROVINCE PROMISING DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE.

6. MOUJAHID IS, BY COMPARISON, MAN OF WASTED POTENTIAL. WHILE IN SANA HE IS STAYING WITH ANOTHER FAILED TRIBAL REBEL, AHMED ALI AL-MATTARI, FROM STRATEGIC AREA JUST TO EAST OF SANA ON ROAD TO HODEIDA. MATTARI SEEMS TO HAVE

BEEN LET OUT OF JAIL JUST IN TIME TO PLAY HOST TO MOUJAHID. HE HAD BEEN IN JAIL SINCE FEBRUARY (SEE SANA 427 AND 353).

COMMENT. FOR A LONG TIME MOUJAHID HAS BEEN MOST PAINFUL THORN IN SIDE OF HAMDI. MOUJAHID HAS ORGANIZED TRIBAL CONFERENCES TO DENOUNCE HAMDI, CIRCULATED PAMPHLETS AGAINST HIM, PAID FOR LONG SERIES OF BOMBINGS IN SANA, ANGLED HARD FOR SAUDI SUPPORT AND TOOK IRAQI MONEY. NOTHING WORKED. HAMDI REPLIED BY WORKING PATIENTLY TO ISOLATE MOUJAHID, AVOID MILITARY REACTIONS WHICH WOULD GIVE MOUJAHID WAY TO RALY TRIBES AGAINST

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GOVERNMENT. THIS HAS NOW WORKED, AND HAMDI MUST BE VERY PLEASED TO SEE THE BITTER, CAPABLE, AGGRESSIVE, FORMER MILITARY COLLEAGUE GO ABROAD SO MEEKLY.
RANSOM

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